

WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS FOR SOUTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN COUNTIES

January 2002



A guarded December. Separately, an analysis of wages in the year 2000.

In December of 2001, the U.S. unemployment rate edged up further from 5.3% to 5.4%. Over the same time period (November 2001 to December 2001), Wisconsin's unemployment rate eased from 4.3 percent to 4.2 percent, the South Central part of the state maintained its 2.9 percent rate and Dane County (also called the Madison Metropolitan Statistical Area), climbed from 1.9 percent to 2.0 percent unemployment, still the lowest in the state. (All unemployment rates reported are not seasonally adjusted.)

Averaging the unemployment rate changes in the eleven Decembers from 1990 to 2000, South Central Wisconsin's unemployment rate typically edges up a tenth of a percent, instead of remaining constant, as it did in 2001. Only two counties' rates fell, in both cases more due to reductions in the number of people in the labor force rather than to increases in the number of jobs.

Labor force estimates suggest that Dodge county had over 200 fewer unemployed people and nearly 350 fewer unemployed people in December than in November, yielding a labor force roughly 550 people smaller. Although the labor force usually contracts in the winter, November saw a record contraction and December's was larger than usual.

The manufacturing slowdown continues to pinch Dodge and Jefferson Counties, which, respectively, had roughly 700 and over 450 fewer manufacturing jobs this December than the previous one. This situation substantially hampered Jefferson County's net job growth in 2001 and caused Dodge County to lose more jobs than it gained in 2001.

Jefferson County's unemployment rate did not fall by as wide a margin as Dodge County's did, but it's unemployment

rate remains far lower. (Jefferson reports 3.3 percent versus 4.9 percent in Dodge.) This also reflects unemployment rates closer to it's 1990 to 2000 average unemployment rate for December (Jefferson's average is closer to 3.3 percent, Dodge's is nearer 3.9 percent).

The winter slowdown in construction affected Dane County and Sauk County most, where nearly 550 and over 250 construction jobs were shed, respectively. In both cases, these changes followed seasonal patterns very closely. Sauk County had fewer construction jobs for most months in 2001 than for the same months in 2000. To some degree, this reflects a modest decline from an unsustainable pace of growth. Dane County's gain of 540 retail jobs and Sauk County's loss of 240 retail jobs were also very close to average December changes. Holiday shopping was neither the great boost some had hoped for nor the great letdown that some feared.

Average wages in the year 2000

According to a report of earnings covered by Wisconsin's Unemployment Insurance law, South Central Wisconsin's wages were 5.1 percent higher in 2000 than they had been in 1999. (See table on second page.) Averaging \$32,819 per person in wages, Dane County continues to be the only one the area with wages higher than the state (\$30,687) and it experienced faster wage growth than the state or its neighbors. Marquette County had the lowest average wage level (\$22,204) and the second fastest 1-year growth rate (4.5%).

Across the board, South Central Wisconsin's retail wages tended to be somewhere near half of the all-industries average. This is partially offset by the fact that retail positions are less likely to be primary sources of income and more likely to

Labor force estimates - not seasonally adjusted

December 2001 Estimates	Wisconsin	South Central WI	Madison MSA	Columbia County	Dodge County	Jefferson County	Marquette County	Sauk County
<i>December 2001</i>								
Civilian Labor Force*	3,035,200	440,300	278,200	27,100	48,400	44,000	7,100	35,500
Employed	2,908,700	427,700	272,600	25,700	46,000	42,600	6,600	34,200
Unemployed	126,500	12,600	5,500	1,410	2,400	1,460	500	1,350
Unemployment Rate (%)	4.2	2.9	2.0	5.2	4.9	3.3	7.0	3.8
<i>Change From November 2001</i>								
Civilian Labor Force*	-16,100	-3,000	-1,440	-130	-550	-320	-30	-560
Employed	-12,000	-2,800	-1,540	-180	-340	-40	-50	-670
Unemployed	-4,100	-220	100	40	-210	-280	10	110
Unemployment Rate (%)	-0.1	0.0	0.1	0.2	-0.4	-0.6	0.2	0.4
<i>Change From December 2000</i>								
Civilian Labor Force*	27,100	8,700	6,100	810	130	350	190	1,100
Employed	-10,300	4,400	4,100	410	-970	-90	100	770
Unemployed	37,400	4,300	1,990	400	1,090	440	80	330
Unemployment Rate (%)	1.2	1.0	0.7	1.4	2.3	1.0	1.0	0.8

* Includes people residing in area. Estimates are NOT seasonally adjusted. Current month estimates are preliminary. Numbers 2,000 and greater are rounded to nearest 100. Numbers under 2,000 are rounded to nearest 10. Sub-units may not add to totals due to rounding. Calculations are based on unrounded numbers.

Average Annual Wages for Covered Employment

	Wisconsin	South Central WI	Madison MSA	Columbia County	Dodge County	Jefferson County	Marquette County	Sauk County
Total jobs, all industries**	\$30,687	\$30,803	\$32,819	\$24,442	\$29,132	\$27,142	\$22,101	\$24,598
Government	\$33,287	\$36,415	\$38,412	\$28,110	\$30,565	\$29,286	\$22,270	\$26,492
Agricult. Forestry & Fishing	\$21,956	\$24,934	\$25,746	\$20,422	\$24,959	\$24,787	\$18,774	\$24,701
Construction	\$37,764	\$40,050	\$41,134	\$29,521	\$43,711	\$32,477	\$30,508	\$38,873
Manufacturing	\$39,015	\$36,112	\$38,833	\$32,168	\$35,629	\$34,191	\$30,165	\$32,140
Durable	\$39,816	\$36,807	\$39,914	\$32,403	\$36,858	\$33,397	\$29,934	\$32,761
Nondurable	\$37,764	\$35,257	\$37,563	\$32,000	\$33,607	\$35,133	N/A	\$31,184
Wholesale trade	\$39,539	\$38,043	\$40,613	\$26,425	\$31,416	\$29,163	\$20,781	\$36,369
Retail Trade	\$15,850	\$15,591	\$16,516	\$13,360	\$13,087	\$14,692	\$10,528	\$13,838
Finance, Ins. & Real Est.	\$39,554	\$38,335	\$40,112	\$23,850	\$23,766	\$24,250	\$23,519	\$28,922
Services	\$27,107	\$27,619	\$30,058	\$19,405	\$21,733	\$22,865	\$15,143	\$20,524
1-yr. all ind. wage growth	3.6%	5.1%	5.5%	3.6%	4.3%	3.7%	4.5%	3.3%
10-yr. all ind. wage growth	45.4%	47.3%	48.8%	45.7%	46.5%	43.3%	43.3%	41.9%

Source: Unemployment Compensation Covered Employment & Wages, Report 209, November 2001

be part-time income supplements. High wages in construction and manufacturing mask the seasonal and cyclical uncertainties that accompany those jobs.

Looking at wage growth from 1990 to 2000 (not shown above), agriculture, forestry and fishing tended to yield lower wage increases than other industries (except in Marquette

County). Finance, insurance and real estate topped Madison's wage growth (71% over 10 years), but ranked fairly low elsewhere except Jefferson County. Except in Marquette and Sauk Counties, services generated strong proportional wage growth. Although service wages still lag behind other industries, the gap may be closing between services and other industries.

Payroll employment estimates - not seasonally adjusted

December 2001 Estimates	Wisconsin	South Central WI	Madison MSA	Columbia County	Dodge County	Jefferson County	Marquette County	Sauk County
<i>December 2001</i>								
Total jobs, all industries**	2,851,600	435,000	300,200	20,800	35,700	38,600	3,700	36,000
Construction & Mining	124,600	20,800	14,300	1,090	2,100	1,230	230	1,880
Manufacturing	576,800	67,700	28,700	5,300	12,800	12,700	1,240	7,100
Transport & Public Util.	136,900	15,100	10,200	700	1,340	1,770	130	1,000
Wholesale Trade	137,000	18,200	12,900	810	1,050	1,500	90	1,770
Retail Trade	515,300	78,400	52,700	4,300	5,300	7,200	780	8,100
Finance, Ins. Real Estate	153,300	26,900	23,500	390	870	810	120	1,110
Services	788,100	112,400	81,500	4,500	7,200	9,100	540	9,600
Government	419,500	95,500	76,300	3,800	5,000	4,200	620	5,500
<i>Change From November 2001</i>								
Total jobs, all industries**	-5,000	-1,480	-800	90	-130	100	-160	-580
Construction & Mining	-7,500	-1,140	-540	-30	-110	-60	-130	-260
Manufacturing	-3,200	-300	-220	0	-110	50	-10	-10
Transport & Public Util.	600	-30	10	-20	-10	10	0	-30
Wholesale Trade	-150	-30	-30	0	-10	0	-10	10
Retail Trade	3,000	190	490	-50	20	-40	0	-240
Finance, Ins. Real Estate	620	230	180	0	30	10	0	10
Services	3,200	640	530	200	0	80	-10	-160
Government	-1,600	-1,020	-1,230	-20	60	60	0	100
<i>Change From December 2000</i>								
Total jobs, all industries**	-11,500	7,500	6,600	500	-650	120	0	990
Construction & Mining	-1,220	310	310	20	-90	0	50	10
Manufacturing	-35,000	-2,900	-1,690	20	-700	-460	-30	-80
Transport & Public Util.	-360	90	80	-20	40	-10	10	-20
Wholesale Trade	-2,700	150	130	-20	-10	10	0	20
Retail Trade	1,190	2,100	1,010	180	130	210	40	490
Finance, Ins. Real Estate	2,900	1,390	1,420	-50	0	10	0	20
Services	13,800	4,000	3,200	200	-10	150	0	490
Government	9,900	2,400	2,100	160	-20	210	-80	50

**Includes employment with employers located in area. Estimates are NOT seasonally adjusted. Current month estimates are preliminary. Numbers 2,000 and greater are rounded to nearest 100. Numbers under 2,000 are rounded to nearest 10. Sub-units may not add to totals due to rounding. Calculations are based on unrounded numbers.

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